



Arizona Homeless Education Program

Arizona HEP Office Hours:
Navigating Dispute Resolution Processes
November 2025

Housekeeping Items

- If you have questions throughout today's session, please share them in the following ways:
 - Enter simple questions into the Q&A feature or type them into the chat.
 - Email homeless@azed.gov with any LEA-specific questions.
- Due to the nature of this Office Hours session, we will not be sharing or posting a recording of the session, however we will share the slides once available.
- All resources referenced in this training have been shared with LEA McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons and can be accessed on the Arizona Homeless Education Program website.
- AI note-taking and other tools are not permitted in ADE sessions.

Arizona Department of Education

The Arizona Department of Education is a service organization committed to raising academic outcomes and empowering parents.

Arizona Homeless Education Program

The mission of the Arizona Homeless Education Program is to ensure positive comparable academic outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness through implementation of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Mission Statements





Meet the Team



Dr. Brittani (Didi) Roy
*Director of
Educational Policy
& Program Integrity*

**Homeless Education
Program**

**Homeless, Foster Care,
and Refugee Student
Support**



Rita Rodriguez
*Homeless Education
Program
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Marisa Peña
*Refugee Student
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*Homeless Education
Program Grants
Specialist*



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*Homeless Education
Program Data &
Monitoring Specialist*

Arizona Homeless Education Program





Today's Session

Objective

Participants will...

- understand requirements and necessary procedures to ensure the provision of the **dispute resolution process** at the **LEA and SEA-levels** for students experiencing homelessness, and
- understand requirements, procedures, and necessary coordination to participate in the **SEA-level (LEA vs. LEA) dispute resolution process**.

Common Acronyms and Terms

DOE

Department of
Education

SEA

State Education
Agency

LEA

Local Educational
Agency

ADE

Arizona
Department of
Education

HEP

Homeless
Education Program

HCY

Homeless Children
and Youth

UHY

Unaccompanied
Homeless Youth

SIS

Student
information system

AzEDS

Arizona Education
Data Standards

BID

Best interest
determination

CBO

Community-based
organization

NCHE

National Center for
Homeless
Education

SHC

SchoolHouse
Connection

TA

Technical
Assistance

McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison of Record
Site-Based McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison

Access Previous Professional Learning



The screenshot shows the Arizona Department of Education website. The header includes the ADE logo, navigation links (Parents, Educators & Administrators, Programs, About ADE, Data & Systems, ADEConnect), and social media icons. The main content area features a banner with the text "YOUR CHILD DESERVES AN EDUCATION" and "AZED.GOV/HOMELESS". Below the banner is the "Arizona Homeless Education Program Mission" section, followed by "Our Governing Statute" which details the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. A right-hand sidebar contains a menu with links to the homepage, liaisons, grant funding, monitoring, data, and other resources. A contact section at the bottom of the sidebar lists Rita Rodriguez, State Homeless Education Program Coordinator, with her phone number and email address, and a "Contact the Department" button.

Today's session is designed to be an in-depth extension of the information shared in previous sessions, such as:

- McKinney-Vento in Practice for New Liaisons, August 2025
- McKinney-Vento in Practice for Experienced Liaisons, August 2025
- Eligibility Determinations, Best Interest Determinations (BIDs), Managing Disputes, & Providing Written Notification, December 2024
- Eligibility Determinations, Best Interest Determinations (BIDs), Managing Disputes, & Providing Written Notification – Mandatory Compliance Training, December 2023

You can access all previously provided sessions on the [Arizona HEP website](#).

Ice-Breaker



Think about a time that you had to escalate a concern or issue at a restaurant, your doctor's office, your child's school, your bank, insurance provider or in some other situation?

Thinking about that experience, **how would you rate your experience resolving the matter?**

Use the scale that pops up to share your experience with the resolution.

SEA and LEA Level Requirements for Dispute Resolution



- Office of the State Coordinator
- Local Education Agencies
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons

Functions of the Office of the Coordinator

1. **Gather and make publicly available** reliable, valid, and comprehensive **information**;
2. Develop and carry out the **State Plan**;
3. **Collect data** for and transmit to the Secretary...a report containing **information necessary to assess the educational needs** of homeless children and youths within the State;
4. **Coordinate activities and collaborate** in order to **improve** the provision of comprehensive education and related services to homeless children and youths and their families;
5. Provide **technical assistance** to and conduct **monitoring** of LEAs in coordination with LEA liaisons to ensure that LEAs comply with requirements;
6. Provide **professional development** opportunities for LEA personnel and the LEA liaison to assist in identifying and meeting the needs of homeless children and youths, and provide training on the definitions of terms related to homelessness;
7. **Respond to inquiries from parents and guardians** of homeless children and youths, and (in the case of unaccompanied youths) such youths, to ensure that each child or youth who is the subject of such an inquiry receives the full protections and services provided.

Responsibilities of the LEA

In general, each LEA must:

- Ensure *access* to education,
- Connect families with *services*,
- Form *collaborations* with CBOs, and
- *Inform* and provide learning for all stakeholders.

Ensure a student's education may continue at their **school of origin**,

Enroll students in the same school a non-homeless student would be enrolled in,

Comply with **school stability** protocol,

Assist families in attaining **enrollment** forms and records if needed,

Manage any **disputes**,

Uphold student and family **privacy**,

Provide comparable **services** and **education** to homeless students,

Coordinate with local social service agencies, within the LEA.

Align with the **Arizona State Plan**.

42 U.S.C. § 11432 (e)(3)(C), (g)(3)

Responsibilities of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison

1. Homeless youth are **identified** through outreach with other agencies;
2. Homeless youth are **enrolled** in and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school;
3. Access to federally required resources: HeadStart and other **preschool** programs, interventions under IDEA, etc.;
4. **Referral to well-being services**: health care, dental, mental health, substance abuse, housing, etc.;
5. **Inform** families and youth of **educational opportunities** with meaningful opportunities to participate;
6. Provide understandable **public notice of educational rights** in locations frequented by homeless youth, guardians, and unaccompanied youth: schools, shelters, public libraries, soup kitchens;
7. Mediate enrollment **disputes** according to federal guidance;
8. Inform family and youth of all **transportation services**;
9. Provide **professional development** and support for all stakeholders who serve homeless students; and
10. Assist **unaccompanied youth** with: enrollment, academic access and success, and notification of “Independent” status and assistance for FAFSA.

LEA and SEA Level Disputes for Students Experiencing Homelessness



- Identification Process
- LEA Level Dispute
- SEA Level Dispute following the LEA Level Dispute

“If a **dispute** arises over eligibility, or school selection or enrollment in a school—

(iii) the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the local educational agency **liaison** designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii), who shall **carry out the dispute resolution process** as described in paragraph (1)(C) as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and

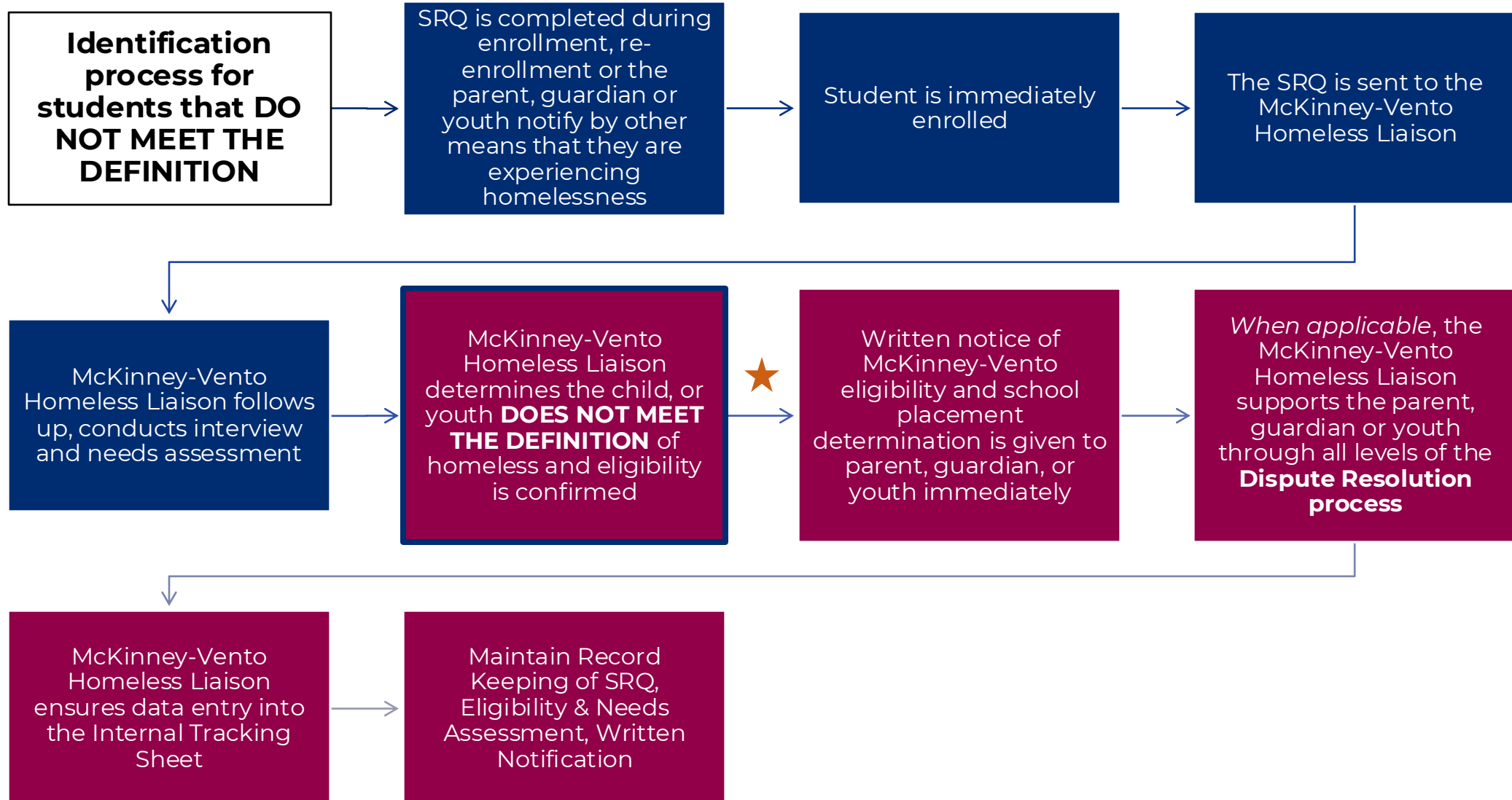
(iv) in the case of an **unaccompanied youth**, the liaison shall ensure that the youth is **immediately enrolled** in the school in which the youth seeks enrollment pending resolution of such dispute.”

[42 U.S.C. § 11432 \(g\)\(3\)\(E\)](#)

Dispute Resolution



Identification Process For In-Eligible Students



★ A BID may take place at this point.

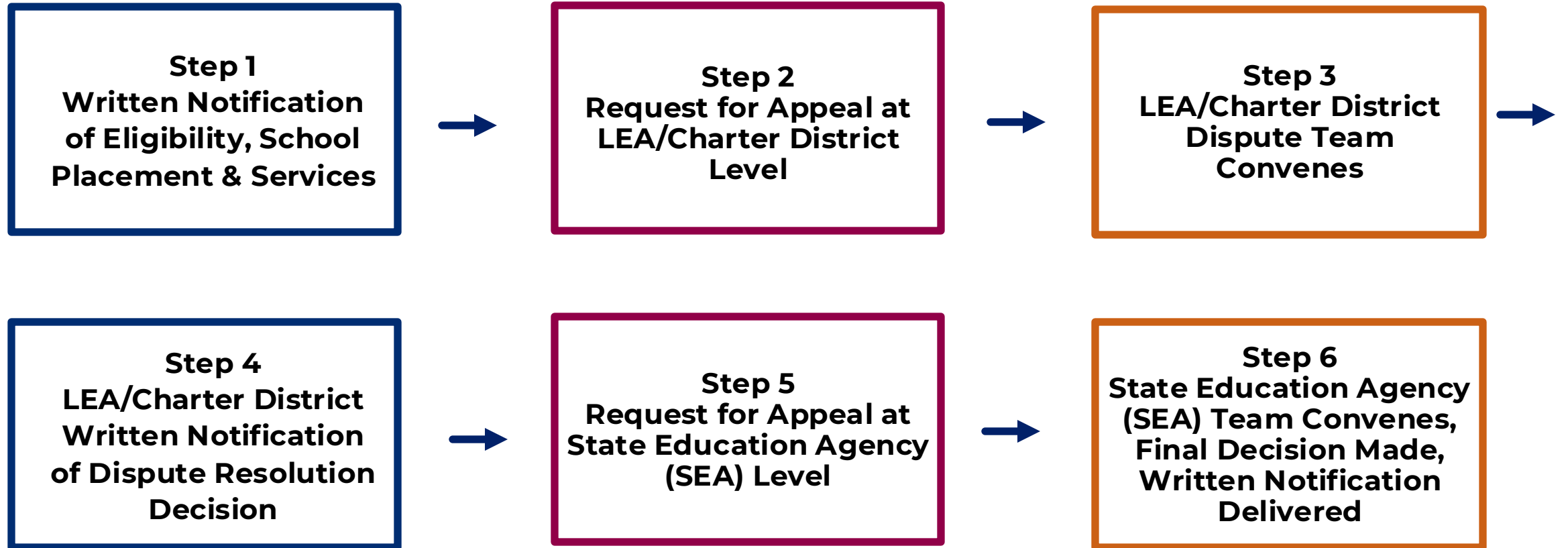
Why Would a Dispute Be Requested at the LEA Level?

Some of the most common reasons a parent, guardian or youth requests a dispute:

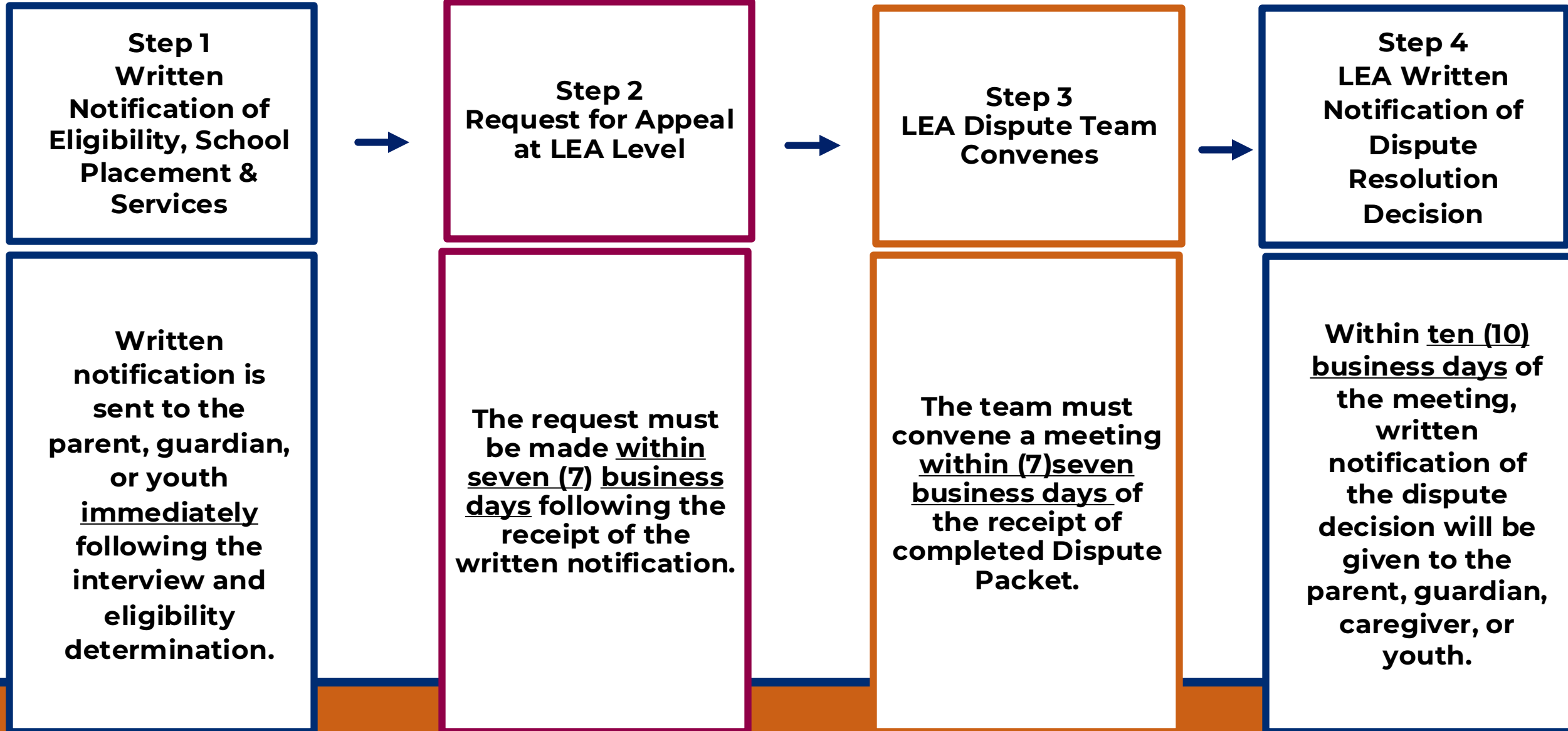
1. Following the McKinney-Vento Identification Process:
 - For in-eligible students
 - For eligible students
2. The student is identified as HCY but the LEA is determined school placement will not be honored at their LEA.
3. The student is identified as HCY but transportation is not going to be provided which is a service related to eligibility in some cases.
4. The student is identified as HCY, a BID is held due to varied reasons, and the school enrollment is being changed.
5. The student is identified as HCY, transportation was established, there become concerns involving transportation, a BID is held, transportation is modified or is no longer going to be provided based on the BID decision.

**Our LEA received a request for an LEA
Level Dispute, now what?**

Overview of Dispute Resolution Steps Student or Family vs. LEA



LEA Level Dispute Resolution Process



**Our LEA received a request to file an SEA
Level Dispute after the LEA-level, now what?**

SEA Level Dispute: (Student or Family vs LEA)

- Steps 5 and 6 are followed only when a parent, guardian or youth requests the dispute at the SEA-Level.

**Step 5
Request for Appeal
at State Education
Agency (SEA) Level**



**Step 6
State Education
Agency (SEA) Team
Convenes, Final
Decision Made,
Written Notification
Delivered**

**The Arizona
Department of
Education must
receive this dispute
no later than seven
(7) business days
after the district's
decision is received
in writing.**

**Within seven (7)
business days of the
date the dispute is
received, the panel
will convene to
review the dispute
and issue a written
decision to all parties
involved.**

***The determination of
this panel shall be
final.***

SEA-Level Dispute Resolution Procedure: Student or Family vs LEA

- **The SEA-Level Dispute Resolution Procedure (Student/Family vs. LEA) is located on the Arizona HEP website.**
 - If the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth is dissatisfied with the LEA's dispute resolution, they have the right to file an appeal with the Arizona Department of Education Office of Homeless Education within seven (7) business days of receiving the LEA's written dispute resolution notification.
 - This form shall be used by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth AFTER the appeal process has been completed, and a determination has been made at the LEA-level.
 - Please contact the LEA's McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison to obtain assistance in filing a SEA-level dispute resolution request. If needed, please refer to the Arizona McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison Contact List for the contact information for the LEA's McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison.

Important Reminders: Written Notification & Related Services

- **LEAs are required to provide written notification is sent to the parent, guardian, or youth immediately following the interview, needs assessment and eligibility determination.**
 - Eligibility determinations
 - Modifications in school enrollment decisions
 - Modifications in provision of services as required within the McKinney-Vento Act
- **Timelines**
 - Notification of the eligibility determination must be immediately provided to the parent, guardian or youth.
 - The parent, guardian or youth must request a dispute within seven (7) business days following the receipt of the written notification. The request can be made verbally or in writing.
- **Enrollment to ensure full participation, including establishing transportation must be established immediately and must remain in in place for the duration of all levels of disputes.**

Important Reminders: Dispute Resolution Timelines

- **Written Notification of Eligibility, School Placement & Services**
 - Notification of the eligibility determination must be immediately provided to the parent, guardian or youth.
- **Request for Appeal at LEA Level**
 - The parent, guardian or youth must request a dispute within seven (7) business days following the receipt of the written notification. The request can be made verbally or in writing.
- **LEA Written Notification of Dispute Resolution Decision**
 - Within ten (10) business days of the meeting, written notification of the dispute decision will be given to the parent, guardian, caregiver, or youth.
- **Request for Appeal at State Education Agency (SEA) Level**
 - The Arizona Department of Education must receive this dispute no later than seven (7) business days after the district's decision is received in writing.
- **State Education Agency (SEA) Team Convenes, Final Decision Made, Written Notification Delivered**
 - Within seven (7) business days of the date the dispute is received, the panel will convene to review the dispute and issue a written decision to all parties involved. The determination of this panel shall be final.



Questions

**STUDENT/FAMILY VS. LEA DISPUTE AT THE
LEA AND SEA LEVELS**

SEA Level Dispute Resolution LEA vs LEA



- SEA Level dispute (LEA vs LEA)

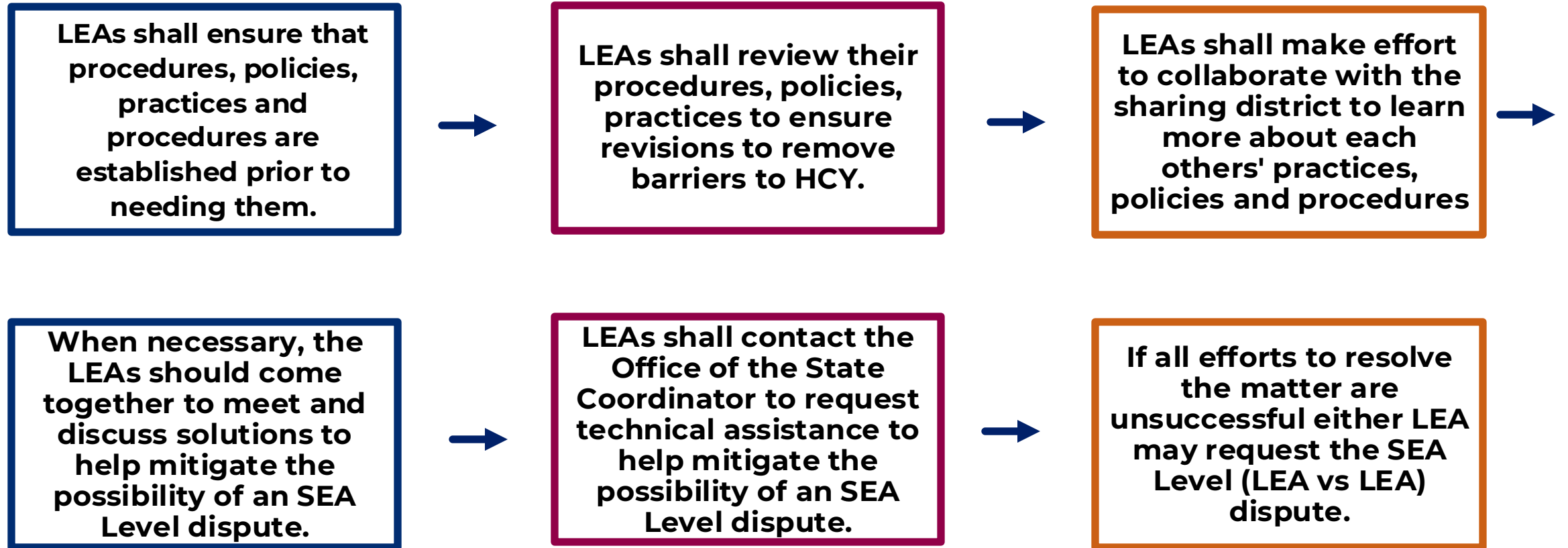
Why Would a Dispute Be Requested by an LEA at the SEA Level?

Some of the most common reasons a State Level (LEA vs LEA) dispute is requested:

1. A request for transportation is submitted by the school of origin to the sharing district and coordination is stalled or not responded to.
2. The requesting district request a mode of transportation based on student-centered factors and determined to be in the best interest of the student and the sharing district disregards the request and elects to offer a different mode.
3. Transportation is cancelled without notification being give to the sharing LEA.
4. The two LEAs cannot agree upon a method to share the coordination and/or cost.

**Our LEA has been unable to coordinate
transportation with the sharing district.
Now what?**

Overview of Dispute Resolution Steps SEA Level (LEA vs LEA)



SEA Level Dispute (LEA vs LEA)

Next Steps

The following steps are followed by our office when the SEA-Level (LEA vs LEA) dispute is received.

Request for Appeal at State Education Agency (SEA) Level



The State Education Agency (SEA) Team Convenes, Final Decision Made, Written Notification Delivered

The Arizona Department of Education must receive this dispute no later than seven (7) business days after the district's decision is received in writing.

Within seven (7) business days of the date the dispute is received, the panel will convene to review the dispute and issue a written decision to all parties involved.

The determination of this panel shall be final.

SEA-Level Dispute Resolution Procedure: LEA vs LEA

- **The SEA-Level Dispute Resolution Procedure (LEA vs. LEA) is located on the Arizona HEP website.**
 - In the event of a dispute between two LEAs regarding eligibility for services, school selection, enrollment, or transportation of a child or youth experiencing homelessness, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons involved must file a dispute resolution request with the SEA.
 - This form shall be used by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons involved in an LEA vs. LEA dispute and outlines the process to file a request for a dispute resolution.
 - If you are not the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison, please consult with the LEA's McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison prior to submitting this form.

Important Statutory Reminders

- LEAs are required to have written develop, review and revise, policies to remove barriers to the identification, and enrollment of HCY. Procedures include coordination of transportation to ensure school stability (42 U.S.C. §11432 (g)(1)(I)).
- LEAs are required to adopt policies, practices, procedures, If a request to share transportation is received by another LEA, the two LEAs shall coordinate to determine how transportation will be provided (42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)).
- Applying local policies that establish blanket routing times for transportation to students experiencing homelessness would violate the McKinney-Vento Act. The federal law supersedes any contrary state or local policies (42 USC §11432(g)(3)(A)).
- LEAs shall contact the Office of State Coordinator for technical assistance to help mitigate the potential for a State Level dispute which may include:
 - Requesting a meeting with the LEAs involved in the shared request to learn more and provide guidance.
 - Review of the LEAs McKinney-Vento transportation procedures.
- The Office of the State Coordinator will respond to the inquiry to ensure that homeless children and youth (HCY) receive the full protections and services provided by the McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. §11432 (f)(5)).

Important Reminders: Removal of Barrier

- “Some situations exist in which an LEA must provide transportation assistance for a student experiencing homelessness that may exceed what is provided to other students because LEAs and schools are required to remove barriers to the school enrollment and attendance of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including transportation barriers.” [*“Transporting Children and Youth, NCHE Brief”*](#)
- Comparable services shall be provided to students experiencing homelessness to remove any barriers to their full participation. In addition, if a standard service or policy poses a barrier to a homeless student’s full participation (enrollment, daily and on-time attendance, extra-curricular opportunities, etc.), the LEA must coordinate services to remove that barrier. [\(42 U.S.C. §§ 11432\(g\)\(1\)\(I\), \(g\)\(4\)\)](#)

Important Reminders: Transportation Coordination

- The LEA McKinney-Vento Transportation Procedure must rest on the individualized and **student-centered best interest** determinations, not on blanket statement of mileage limits and specific routing times frames.
- **Applying local policies** that establish **blanket routing times or limited modes** for transportation to students experiencing homelessness would **violate** the **McKinney-Vento Act**. The federal law supersedes any contrary state or local policies 42 USC §11432(g)(3)(A).



Questions

SEA LEVEL DISPUTE

LEA VS LEA

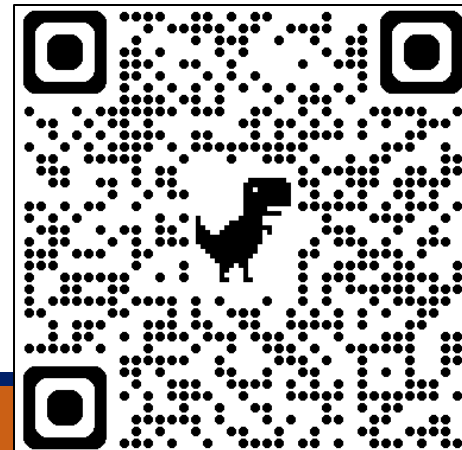


Closing & Next Steps

Register Now for Upcoming Professional Learning Sessions!

- **Office Hours: Navigating the Identification Process Step-by-Step**
 - December 4th at 10am and 1pm
- **ESEA Programmatic Monitoring: What Liaisons Should Know About MR5**
 - January 29th at 10am and 1pm
- **Office Hours: The FAFSA Simplification Act**
 - February 26th at 10am and 1pm
- **Office Hours: Supporting Migratory Students Experiencing Homelessness**
 - March 26th at 10am and 1pm
- **Required End of Year Procedures for Local Homeless Education Programs**
 - April 23rd at 10am and 1pm
- **Office Hours: End of Year Programmatic and Data Reporting Requirements**
 - May 14th at 10am and 1pm

[Scan the QR code or click here to register!](#)



Feedback Survey & Certificates

Feedback Survey

- Will only populate once you click **“Leave Meeting”**
- Must complete to receive a professional learning certificate of participation

Related Guidance and Other Resources

- HEP website
- Slides for this session will be shared once available



Additional Questions



Technical Assistance

Arizona Department of Education
Homeless Education Program

(602)542-4963

homeless@azed.gov